

REMARKS

Applicant wishes to thank Examiner Randall E. Chin for his time and effort during the telephonic interview on October 27, 2003 with applicants' attorney, John M. Augustyn. The interview discussed the pending Office Action, the "hinge line" in claim 1, claim 45 with respect to U.S. Patent 5,272,783 to Richardson, et al., and the addition of dependent claims for independent claims 45 and 46.

The Pending Claims

Currently pending are independent claims 1, 12, 24, 45 and 46 as well as dependent claims 3-6, 9-11, 14-16, and 18-20. Also pending are new dependent claims 47-54. The pending claims are all directed toward a butterfly-style mop.

Summary of the Office Action

The Office Action dated June 26, 2003 indicated that claims 1, 45, and 46 are unclear because of the described arrangement of the hinge line, central axis, and longitudinal axis and suggested corrections. The Office Action further suggested that in claim 11, "said connection portion" should be changed to read "said connecting portion" for consistency. Also suggested by the Office Action is that in claim 12, "displace" should be changed to read "displaced" and that the dependency of claim 14 should be changed from claim 13 to claim 12. Also requested is clarification of claim 15 regarding what "said ends" refers to. Lastly, the Office Action rejected claim 45 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. 5,272,783 ("Richardson '783").

Amendments to the Claims

In response to the Office Action's suggestions, Applicants have amended claim 11 to read "said connecting portion" for consistency. Applicants have also switched the dependency of claim 14 to claim 12 from claim 13 which had been previously canceled. For clarity, Applicants have also amended claim 12 and claim 15 to refer to "first and second regions" instead of "ends" and "said ends." The amendments are fully supported by the original specification and drawings and, as such, add no new matter. Particularly, the amendments to claims 12 and 15 regarding "first and second regions" is supported at page 6, lines 4-6.

Applicants have added new dependent claims 47-54 that depend from existing independent claims 45 and 46. New claims 47-54 are fully supported by the originally filed specification and drawings and, as such, add no new subject matter.

Response to the Office Action

In response to the Office Action's suggestions concerning the recitation of "hinge line," "central axis," and "longitudinal axis" in claims 1, 45, and 46, Applicants do not believe that the claims need to be amended and the following explanation may be helpful. With reference to FIG. 4, Applicants point out that the "hinge line" is denoted by reference number 62, that "central axis" is denoted by reference number 32, and the "longitudinal axis" is denoted by reference number 31. See also Specification page 6, lines 2-4, and page 7, lines 3-6. The hinge line 62 is actually generally perpendicular to the central axis 32 as recited in claims 1, 45 and 46, not parallel as the Office Actions suggests. For clarity, it is further noted that the longitudinal axis 31 is perpendicular to the central axis 32 and parallel to the hinge line 62.

Regarding the rejection of claim 45, Applicants further note that claim 45 recites a mop element having a central axis and further that the mop element is disposed with respect to said channel body along a hinge line that is generally perpendicular to the central axis. Claim 45 further recited that the application of a longitudinal force causes the mop element to move about to the hinge line and to fold at the central axis.

With respect to Richardson '783, Applicants submit that Richardson '783 does not teach or suggest the features of a hinge line perpendicular to a central axis. Neither does Richardson '783 teach or suggest that the mop element, during application of a longitudinal force, both moves about the hinge line and folds at the central axis. Instead, referring to FIGS. 1 and 15, the Richardson '783 mop element only folds about a central axis without any associated movement about a hinge line corresponding to a channel body and perpendicular to the central axis. In fact, there is no hinge line in Richardson '783 that corresponds to the hinge line of claim 45. Since Richardson '783 does not disclose or reasonably suggest a hinge line, claim 45 is patentable and the anticipation rejection should be withdrawn.

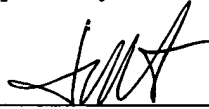
Conclusion

The application is considered in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a

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telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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